

ISOCRATES

TO NICOCLES

TO NICOCLES : INTRODUCTION

Isocrates probably discussed the problem of ideal leadership with his pupils from the earliest days of his school, and the *Busiris* is a rhetorical exercise on the subject. Later he addressed kings in short letters and in the discourse *To Philip*. These writings are in varying degrees the products of his quest for a leader of the Greeks against the barbarians. No such quest prompted him to write to Nicocles, son of Euagoras, at the beginning of his reign over Cyprus (374/3 B.C.).¹ His interest in the prince was personal and local. Nicocles had been his pupil, and the purpose of this address is to offer advice on the immediate problems facing a king in his own country: how to sustain his authority and make his reign acceptable to his subjects and tolerable for himself.

After introducing his subject by remarking on the paradox that rulers, in spite of their enjoyment of great material wealth, are at a disadvantage in the crucial matter of education (1-8), Isocrates begins a careful portrayal of a ruler who avoids all the vices of tyranny as they had come to be recognised and abhorred by his time. His function is to bring prosperity to his people (9).² His superiority to his people in intelligence (10) must be matched by his superior qualities and accomplishments (*ἀρεταῖς*) (12).³ These qualities can be acquired and cultivated. The tyrants of the past had turned to poets and wise men for counsel and moral guidance: Nicocles should do the same, but, unlike them, follow their advice (13).⁴ His success will depend on the rigour he applies to his self-improvement (14).

Isocrates describes the ruler's general attitude to his subjects before proceeding to more detailed measures. The words he uses - *φιλόανθρωπον* and *φιλόπολιν* - are in their different ways revealing. The first presupposes power for good or ill, and is therefore paternalistic. Kindness is the means of better control (15). It is directed particularly towards the 'people' (*πληθός*), making Isocrates' ideal ruler similar in this respect to the traditional tyrant. The second has a more general meaning, which may include the adornment of the city recommended later (19). The advice which follows underlines the prince's absolute power: to make necessary changes and personally to dispense justice (17-18, 23), to administer the city as his own estate (19, 21), to control foreign policy (22). All this power must be used with discretion, which should include the judicious choice of friends and others to help him in government (27-28), but this will be assured if his *ἀρετή* remains in command of his actions. An aspect of this is self-control, touched upon in various contexts (29, 31, 33).

The structure of the discourse is disjointed, as Isocrates himself admitted in 15 *Antidosis* 68. In that passage he says that he "detaches one part from another, breaking up the discourse into what we call 'heads' (*κεφάλαια*)". The use of that word signifies that to disjointedness should be added brevity. Each topic is treated summarily, but

1 Isoc. may have met Euagoras through Timotheus, Conon's son and Isoc.'s most famous Athenian pupil. After Conon and Euagoras had formed their close friendship (*Euag.* 51-57), the prince followed Conon in sending his son Nicocles to Isoc.'s school.

2 *ἀρετή* combines moral and physical excellence, incorporating the idea of 'virtue' and that of 'prowess' in measures which vary in accordance with the context. This renders the word untranslatable into English.

3 For the role of poets as advisers to kings, see Jaeger III 85.

4 So Blass *AB* II 194-195.

may be returned to at a later point, as in 3,28,42 (see notes). In the later chapters attention is focussed upon the prince's *paideia*, perhaps reminding him of his literary studies in Isocrates' school: history, which furnishes examples of past virtue, folly and the power of fortune (35-36), philosophy, especially his own version of it (38-39,41); and once again (cf.3), the distilled wisdom of the poets (43-44,48-49). The discourse ends as it began with the advice to prize good counsel above all other gifts (53), conferring upon it at least a degree of symmetry.⁵

The style of *To Nicocles* conforms to its fragmentary structure. There are comparatively few complex periods, and the average length of sentences is less than two-thirds of those in the *Panegyricus*. The references to the gnomic poets are matched by a tendency to follow their technique of following an injunction (usually an imperative) by an explanation (usually a clause headed by γάρ). *Asyndeton*, the absence of connectives, is used freely (esp.15-41) and adds to the effect of brevity. On the other hand, antithesis, correspondence and homoeoteleuton are well up to the Isocratean average, making an interesting compromise between the old style of didactic literature and the new epideictic style which Isocrates had introduced and used in his longer discourses.

⁵ This style is used in its purest form in the *Letter to Demonicus*.

ΠΡΟΣ ΝΙΚΟΚΛΕΑ.

(α΄.) Οἱ μὲν εἰωθότες, ὧ Νικόκλεις, τοῖς βασι- 14
 λεῦσιν ὑμῖν ἐσθῆτας ἄγειν ἢ χαλκὸν ἢ χρυσὸν εἰργα-
 σμένον ἢ τῶν ἄλλων τι τῶν τοιούτων κτημάτων, ὧν
 αὐτοὶ μὲν ἐνδεεῖς εἰσὶν, ὑμεῖς δὲ πλουτεῖτε, λίαν ἔδο- 15
 ξαν εἶναί μοι καταφανεῖς οὐ δόσιν ἀλλ' ἐμπορίαν ποι-
 ούμενοι καὶ πολὺ τεχνικώτερον αὐτὰ πωλοῦντες τῶν
 2 ὁμολογούντων καπηλεύειν· ἡγησάμην δ' ἂν γενέσθαι
 ταύτην καλλίστην θωρεὰν καὶ χρησιμωτάτην καὶ μά-
 λιστα πρέπουσαν ἐμοί τε δοῦναι καὶ σοὶ λαβεῖν, εἰ δυ-
 νηθεῖν ὀρίσαι, ποίων ἐπιτηδευμάτων ὀρεγόμενος καὶ
 τίνων [ἐργων] ἀπεχόμενος ἄριστ' ἂν καὶ τὴν πόλιν
 καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν διοικίης. τοὺς μὲν γὰρ ιδιώτας ἐστὶ b
 πολλὰ τὰ παιδεύοντα, μάλιστα μὲν τὸ μὴ τρυφᾶν
 ἀλλ' ἀναγκάζεσθαι περὶ τοῦ βίου καθ' ἐκάστην βου-
 3 λεύεσθαι τὴν ἡμέραν, ἐπειδ' οἱ νόμοι, καθ' οὓς ἕκα-
 στοι πολιτευόμενοι τυγχάνουσιν, ἔτι δ' ἡ παρρησία
 καὶ τὸ φανερώς ἐξεῖναι τοῖς τε φίλοις ἐπιπληῆξαι καὶ
 τοῖς ἐχθροῖς ἐπιθέσθαι ταῖς ἀλλήλων ἀμαρτίαις· πρὸς
 δὲ τούτοις καὶ τῶν ποιητῶν τινὲς τῶν προγεγενημέ-
 νων ὑποθήκας ὡς χρηρὴ ζῆν καταλελοίπασιν· ὥστ' ἐξ c
 ἀπάντων τούτων εἰκὸς αὐτοὺς βελτίους γίνεσθαι.
 4 τοῖς δὲ τυράννοις οὐδὲν ὑπάρχει τοιοῦτον, ἀλλ' οὓς
 ἔδει παιδεύεσθαι μᾶλλον τῶν ἄλλων, ἐπειδὴν εἰς τὴν
 ἀρχὴν καταστῶσιν, ἀνουθέτητοι διατελοῦσιν· οἱ μὲν
 γὰρ πλείστοι τῶν ἀνθρώπων αὐτοῖς οὐ πλησιάζουσιν,
 οἱ δὲ συνόντες πρὸς χάριν ὁμιλοῦσιν. καὶ γὰρ τοὶ κύ-
 ριοι γιγνόμενοι καὶ χρημάτων πλείστων καὶ πραγμά- d
 των μεγίστων, διὰ τὸ μὴ καλῶς χρῆσθαι ταύταις ταῖς
 ἀφορμαῖς πεποιήκασιν ὥστε πολλοὺς ἀμφισβητεῖν,

TO NICOCLES

Those men, Nicocles, who are wont to bring to you kings garments or bronze or wrought gold or any other such articles which they lack themselves but which you have in abundance, seem to me very clearly to be making not a gift but a business transaction, and to be peddling their wares with much greater guile than the professional merchants. [2] But for my part, I should have thought that the finest and most useful present, and the most appropriate for me to give and for you to receive, was this - if I could define what activities you should pursue and what you should abstain from in order to administer your state and kingdom to the greatest advantage. Now for men in private life education has many aspects: most importantly, they are trained in avoiding self-indulgence and in the necessity to plan for their livelihood day by day; [3]next there are the laws by which each conducts his civic life; then there is the freedom of speech which openly allows friends to criticise and enemies to attack one another's faults, and besides this there are also certain poets of an earlier generation who have left precepts which suggest how they should live; so that, from all these influences one might reasonably expect them to become better men. [4] For kings, however, no such help exists; on the contrary, they, who ought to be trained more than other men, from the time of their accession to power live out their lives without advice; for the majority of their subjects do not come near them, and their courtiers associate with them only to gain their favour. Indeed, though they enjoy control over huge resources and matters of the greatest importance, they have through their poor use of these advantages made

πότερόν ἐσκιν ἄξιον ἐλέσθαι τὸν βίον τὸν τῶν ἰδιω-
 τευόντων μὲν, ἐπεικῶς δὲ πραττόντων, ἢ τὸν τῶν
 5 τυραννευόντων. ὅταν μὲν γὰρ ἀποβλέψωσιν εἰς τὰς
 τιμὰς καὶ τοὺς πλούτους καὶ τὰς δυναστείας, ἰσοθέ-
 ους ἅπαντες νομίζουσι τοὺς ἐν ταῖς μοναρχίαις ὄντας·
 ἐπειδὰν δ' ἐνθυμηθῶσι τοὺς φόβους καὶ τοὺς κινδύ-
 νους, καὶ διεξιόντες ὁρῶσι τοὺς μὲν ὑφ' ὧν ἥκιστα
 10 χρῆν διαφθαρμένους, τοὺς δ' εἰς τοὺς οὐκαιοτάτους
 ἐξαμαρτεῖν ἠναγκασμένους, τοῖς δ' ἀμφοτέρω ταῦτα
 συμβεβηκότα, πάλιν ὁπώσοῦν ζῆν ἡγοῦνται λυσιτε-
 λεῖν μᾶλλον ἢ μετὰ τοιούτων συμφορῶν ἀπάσης τῆς
 6 Ἀσίας βασιλεύειν. ταύτης δὲ τῆς ἀνωμαλίας καὶ τῆς 16
 ταραχῆς αἰτιὸν ἐστίν, ὅτι τὴν βασιλείαν ὥσπερ ἱερω-
 σύνην παντὸς ἀνδρὸς εἶναι νομίζουσιν, ὃ τῶν ἀνθρω-
 πίνων πραγμάτων μέγιστόν ἐστι καὶ πλείστης προ-
 νοίας δεόμενον.

(β'.) Καθ' ἐκάστην μὲν οὖν τὴν προᾶξιν, ἐξ ὧν
 ἂν τις μάλιστα δύναίτο κατὰ τρόπον διοικεῖν καὶ τὰ
 μὲν ἀγαθὰ διαφυλάττειν, τὰς δὲ συμφορὰς διαφεύ-
 γειν, τῶν αἰεὶ παρόντων ἔργον ἐστὶ συμβουλεύειν·
 καθ' ὅλων δὲ τῶν ἐπιτηδευμάτων, ὧν χρὴ στοχάζε-
 7 σθαι καὶ περὶ ἃ δεῖ διατρίβειν, ἐγὼ πειράσομαι διελ-
 17 θεῖν. εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ τὸ δῶρον ἐξεργασθὲν ἄξιον τῆς
 ὑποθέσεως, χαλεπὸν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς συνιδεῖν· πολλὰ
 γὰρ καὶ τῶν μετὰ μέτρον ποιημάτων καὶ τῶν κατα-
 λογάδην συγγραμμάτων ἐτι μὲν ἐν ταῖς διανοαῖς ὄντα
 τῶν συντιθέντων μεγάλας τὰς προσδοκίας παρέσχεν,
 ἐπιτελεσθέντα δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἐπιδειχθέντα πολὺ
 8 καταδεεστέραν τὴν δόξαν τῆς ἐλπίδος ἔλαβεν· οὐ μὲν
 ἀλλὰ τό γ' ἐπιχείρημα καλῶς ἔχει, τὸ ζητεῖν τὰ παρα-
 λελειμμένα καὶ νομοθετεῖν ταῖς μοναρχίαις. οἱ μὲν γὰρ
 τοὺς ἰδιώτας παιδεύοντες ἐκείνους μόνον ὠφελοῦσιν·

it a matter of general debate whether one ought to choose the life of private citizens who are reasonably prosperous, or that of kings. [5] For when men contemplate their honours, their wealth and their powers, they all think that monarchs are the equals of gods; but when they consider their fears and dangers and, as they review their careers they see some slain by those from whom they least deserved that fate, others forced to commit crimes against their nearest kin, and others to whom both these misfortunes have happened, they return to the view that it is more advantageous to live in any conditions whatsoever, than to rule over all Asia in such unhappy circumstances . [6] And the cause of these incompatible and confused opinions is that men believe the office of king, like that of priest, to be one which any man can discharge, whereas it is the most important of human functions and requires the greatest mental preparation.

Now as to each particular action, it is the function of those close to the king at the time to advise him of the policies which will produce the required result, preserving what is good and avoiding disaster. But concerning the king's conduct in general, I shall try to describe the objects at which he should aim and the way he should spend his time . [7] Whether the finished gift shall be worthy of its intention, it is difficult to tell at the beginning; for many works of poetry and writings in prose have, while still in the minds of their authors, aroused strong expectations, but on completion and publication have acquired a reputation far short of men's expectations. [8] And yet even the mere attempt is worth making - to seek out a neglected subject and to offer advice to kings: for those who educate private citizens assist them

εἰ δέ τις τοὺς κρατοῦντας τοῦ πλήθους ἐπ' ἀρετὴν προτρέψειεν, ἀμφοτέρους ἂν ὀνήσειε, καὶ τοὺς τὰς δυναστείας ἔχοντας καὶ τοὺς ὑπ' αὐτοῖς ὄντας· τοῖς μὲν γὰρ ἂν τὰς ἀρχὰς ἀσφαλεστέρας, τοῖς δὲ τὰς πολιτείας πραοτέρας ποιήσειεν.

- 9 (γ'.) Πρῶτον μὲν οὖν σκεπτέον, τί τῶν βασιλευ- d
όντων ἔργον ἐστίν· ἂν γὰρ ἐν κεφαλαίοις τὴν δύνα-
μιν ὅλου τοῦ πράγματος καλῶς περιλάβωμεν, ἐνταῦθ'
ἀποβλέποντες ἄμεινον καὶ περὶ τῶν μερῶν ἐροῦμεν.
οἶμαι δὴ πάντας ἂν ὁμολογήσαι προσήκειν αὐτοῖς πό-
λιν δυστυχοῦσαν παῦσαι καὶ καλῶς πράττουσαν
διαφυλάξαι καὶ μεγάλην ἐκ μικρᾶς ποιῆσαι· τὰ γὰρ
ἄλλα τὰ-συμπλίκοντα κατὰ τὴν ἡμέραν ἐκάστην τού- e
των ἔνεκα πρακτέον ἐστίν. καὶ μὴν ἐκεῖνό γε φανε-
ρόν, ὅτι δεῖ τοὺς ταῦτα δυνησομένους καὶ περὶ τηλι-
κούτων βουλευομένους μὴ ῥαθυμεῖν μηδ' ἀμελεῖν
ἀλλὰ σκοπεῖν, ὅπως φρονιμώτερον διακείσονται τῶν
ἄλλων. δέδεικται γὰρ, ὅτι τοιαύτας τὰς βασιλείας ἔξου- 17
11 σιν, οἷας περ ἂν τὰς αὐτῶν γνώμας παρασκευάσωσιν.
ᾧστ' οὐδενὶ τῶν ἀσκητῶν οὕτω προσήκει τὸ σῶμα
γυμνάζειν ὥς τοῖς βασιλεύουσι τὴν ψυχὴν τὴν αὐτῶν·
ἀπασαι γὰρ αἱ πανηγύρεις οὐδὲν μέρος τιθέασιν τούτων
τῶν ἁθλῶν, περὶ ὧν ὑμεῖς καθ' ἐκάστην ἀγωνίζεσθε
τὴν ἡμέραν. (δ'.) Ὡν ἐνθυμούμενον χρὴ προσέχειν
τὸν νοῦν, ὅπως ὅσον περ ταῖς τιμαῖς τῶν ἄλλων προ-
12 ἔχεις, τοσοῦτον καὶ ταῖς ἀρεταῖς αὐτῶν διοίσεις. καὶ b
μὴ νόμιζε τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν ἐν μὲν τοῖς ἄλλοις πράγμασι
χρησίμην εἶναι, πρὸς δὲ τὸ βελτίους ἡμᾶς καὶ φρο-
νιμωτέρους γίνεσθαι μηδεμίαν δύναμιν ἔχειν· μηδὲ
καταγνώσκειν τῶν ἀνθρώπων τοσαύτην δυστυχίαν, ὥς
περὶ μὲν τὰ θηρία τέχνας εὗρήκαμεν, αἷς αὐτῶν τὰς
ψυχὰς ἡμεροῦμεν καὶ πλείονος ἀξίας ποιοῦμεν, ἡμᾶς

alone, but if one can turn those who rule over the masses towards virtue, he may benefit both classes, both those holding power and their subjects; for he will give to the rulers greater security in office and to the people more moderate government.

[9] First, then, to be considered is the function of kings; for if we can neatly comprehend the essence of the whole matter under a general heading, we shall speak better about its parts through having it as a point of reference. Well, I think all would agree that it is a king's duty to relieve the state when it is in difficulty, to guard it when it is prosperous, and to raise it from insignificance to greatness; for it is with these aims in view that all the tasks that each day presents must be performed. [10] And this much at least is clear, that those who are able to do all this, and who give counsel on matters of such great importance, must not be idle or careless, but must see to it that they are superior to all others in mental powers; for it has been demonstrated that the quality of their rule will depend on how they equip their own minds. [11] Thus no athlete is required to train his body as kings are to train their souls; for not all the public games in the world confer a fraction of the rewards for which you strive every day. Bearing these thoughts in mind, you must see to it that you surpass others in virtue to the same degree as you exceed them in honours. [12] And do not consider that diligence, while it is useful in all other matters, has no ability to make us better and wiser; nor again should you accuse mankind of being so benighted that, although in dealing with animals we have discovered skills by which we tame their spirits and increase

- δ' αὐτοὺς οὐδὲν ἂν πρὸς ἀρετὴν ὠφελήσασαιμεν, ἀλλ' ὥς καὶ τῆς παιδεύσεως καὶ τῆς ἐπιμελείας μάλιστα δύ- c
 13 ναμένης τὴν ἡμετέραν φύσιν εὐεργετῆν, οὕτω διάκεισο τὴν γνώμην, καὶ τῶν τε παρόντων τοῖς φρονιμωτάτοις πλησίαζε καὶ τῶν ἄλλων οὓς ἂν δύνῃ μεταπέμποι, καὶ μῆτε τῶν ποιητῶν τῶν εὐδοκιμούντων μῆτε τῶν σοφιστῶν μηδενὸς οἴου δεῖν ἀπείρως ἔχειν, ἀλλὰ τῶν μὲν ἀκροατῆς γίγνου, τῶν δὲ μαθητῆς, καὶ παρασκεύαζε σαυτὸν τῶν μὲν ἐλαττόνων κριτὴν, τῶν δὲ μειζόνων ἀγωνιστήν· διὰ γὰρ τούτων τῶν γυμνασίων d
 τάχιστ' ἂν γένοιτο τοιοῦτος, οἷον ὑπεθέμεθα δεῖν εἶναι τὸν ὀρθῶς βασιλεύσοντα καὶ τὴν πόλιν ὥς χρὴ διοι-
 14 κήσουντα. μάλιστα δ' ἂν αὐτὸς ὑπὸ σαυτοῦ παρακληθείης, εἰ δεινὸν ἡγήσαιο τοὺς χεῖρους τῶν βελτιόνων ἄρχειν καὶ τοὺς ἀνυητοτέρους τοῖς φρονιμωτέροις προστάττειν· ὅσῳ γὰρ ἂν ἐρωμενεστέρως τὴν τῶν ἄλλων ἄνοιαν ἀτιμάσης, τοσοῦτ' ἂν μᾶλλον τὴν αὐτοῦ διάνοιαν ἀσκήσεις.
- 15 (ε'.) Ἀρχεσθαι μὲν οὖν ἐντεῦθεν χρὴ τοὺς μέλ-
 λοντάς τι τῶν δεόντων ποιῆσειν, πρὸς δὲ τούτοις φιλ- e
 ἄνθρωπον εἶναι δεῖ καὶ φιλόπολιν· οὔτε γὰρ ἱππῶν οὔτε κυνῶν οὔτ' ἀνδρῶν οὔτ' ἄλλου πράγματος οὐ-
 δενὸς οἷόν τε καλῶς ἄρχειν, ἂν μὴ τις χαίρῃ τούτοις, ὧν αὐτὸν δεῖ ποιεῖσθαι τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν. μελέτω σοι τοῦ πλήθους, καὶ περὶ παντὸς ποιοῦ κεχαρισμένως
 16 αὐτοῖς ἄρχειν, γινώσκων, ὅτι καὶ τῶν ὀλιγαρχιῶν 18
 καὶ τῶν ἄλλων πολιτειῶν αὗται πλεῖστον χρόνον δια-
 μένουσιν, αἵτινες ἂν ἄριστα τὸ πλήθος θεραπεύωσιν.
 καλῶς δὲ δημαγωγῆσεις· ἦν μὴθ' ὑβρίζειν τὸν ὄχλον
 ἕως μὴθ' ὑβριζόμενον περιορᾷς, ἀλλὰ σκοπῆς, ὅπως οἱ βέλτιστοι μὲν τὰς τιμὰς ἔξουσιν, οἱ δ' ἄλλοι μηδὲν ἀδικήσονται· ταῦτα γὰρ στοιχεῖα πρῶτα καὶ μέγιστα

their value, we are unable help ourselves towards virtue. [13] No; condition your mind to believe that education and diligence have the highest power to improve our nature. Seek the company of the wisest of your entourage and send abroad for as many others as you can. And do not think that there is a single one of the famous poets or sages of whom you do not need to know; rather should you listen to the recitals of the former and the lectures of the latter, and equip yourself to be critic of the inferior ones and rival of the greater ones. It is through such training that you may most quickly reach the standard we have assumed necessary for the man who is to rule properly and run the state as it should be run. [14] But the greatest challenge will come from within yourself, so long as you conceive it shocking that the worse should rule the better, and that the foolish should issue commands to wiser men: for the more vehemently you condemn the folly of others, the more you will train your own mind.

[15] It is from that position that rulers who intend to do their duty should begin. But it is also necessary for a king to love his subjects and his country; for neither horses nor dogs nor men nor anything else can be well governed save by one who takes pleasure in the objects of his care. You must cultivate the people, and in everything make it your aim to rule acceptably to them, [16] realising that the most durable of all governments, oligarchies included, are those which look after the masses best. And you will be an effective popular leader if you do not allow the mob either to commit or to suffer outrage, but ensure that the best shall have the honours and the rest suffer no injustice; for these are the first and most important principles of good government.

- 17 χρηστῆς πολιτείας ἐστίν. (ς'.) Τῶν προσταγμάτων καὶ τῶν ἐπιτηδευμάτων κίνει καὶ μετατίθει τὰ μὴ καλῶς καθεστῶτα, καὶ μάλιστα μὲν εὐρετῆς γίγνου τῶν βελτίστων, εἰ δὲ μὴ, μιμοῦ τὰ παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις ὀρθῶς ἔχοντα. ζῆτει νόμους τὸ μὲν σύμπαν δικαίους καὶ συμφέροντας καὶ σφίσιιν αὐτοῖς ὁμολογουμένους, πρὸς δὲ τούτοις οἷτινες τὰς μὲν ἀμφισβητήσεις ὡς ἐλαχίστας, τὰς δὲ διαλύσεις ὡς οἷόν τε ταχίστας τοῖς πολίταις ποιοῦσιν· ταῦτα γὰρ ἅπαντα προσεῖναι δεῖ τοῖς καλῶς
- 18 κειμένοις. τὰς μὲν ἐργασίας αὐτοῖς καθίστη κερδαλέας, c τὰς δὲ πραγματείας ἐπιζημίους, ἵνα τὰς μὲν φεύγωσι, πρὸς δὲ τὰς προθυμότερον ἔχωσιν. τὰς κρίσεις ποιοῦ περὶ ὧν ἂν πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀμφισβητῶσι μὴ πρὸς χάριν μὴδ' ἐναντίας ἀλλήλαις, ἀλλ' αἰετὰν τὰ περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν γίγνωσκε· καὶ γὰρ πρέπει καὶ συμφέρει τὴν τῶν βασιλέων γνώμην ἀκινήτως ἔχειν περὶ τῶν δικαίων, ὥς-
- 19 περ τοὺς νόμους τοὺς καλῶς κειμένους. οἶκει τὴν πό- d λιν ὁμοίως ὥσπερ τὸν πατρῶον οἶκον ταῖς μὲν κατασκευαῖς λαμπρῶς καὶ βασιλικῶς, ταῖς δὲ πράξεσιν ἀκριβῶς, ἵν' εὐδοκιμῆς ᾖ καὶ διαρκῆς. τὴν μεγαλοπρέπειαν ἐπιδείκνυσθαι μὴδ' ἐν μιᾷ τῶν πολυτελειῶν τῶν εὐθὺς ἀφανιζομένων ἀλλ' ἐν τε τοῖς προειρημένοις καὶ τῷ κάλλει τῶν κτημάτων καὶ ταῖς τῶν φίλων εὐεργεσίαις· τὰ γὰρ τοιαῦτα τῶν ἀναλωμάτων αὐτῷ τε σοὶ παραμεινέει καὶ τοῖς ἐπιγιγνομένοις πλείονος ἄξια τῶν e δεδαπανημένων καταλείψει.
- 20 Τὰ πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς ποιεῖ μὲν ὡς οἱ πρόγονοι κατέδειξαν, ἡγοῦ δὲ θῦμα τοῦτο κάλλιστον εἶναι καὶ θεραπείαν μεγίστην, ἃν ὡς βέλτιστον καὶ δικαιοτάτον σπαντὸν παρέχῃς· μάλλον γὰρ ἐλπίς τοὺς τοιούτους ἢ τοὺς ἱερεῖα πολλὰ καταβάλλοντας πράξειν τι παρὰ τῶν 19 θεῶν ἀγαθόν. (ς'.) Τίμα ταῖς μὲν ἀρχαῖς [τῶν φίλων]

[17] When directives and the means of implementing them have been ill-conceived, remove and replace them. If possible, be the author of the finest institutions, or, failing that, imitate what is good in other countries. Seek laws which are wholly just and beneficial and mutually consistent, and which moreover cause the fewest possible arguments and the quickest possible reconciliations between your citizens; for all these qualities should be present in well-founded laws. [18] Make hard work profitable for your subjects and lawsuits detrimental, in order that they may avoid the latter and apply themselves more keenly to the former. When adjudicating in mutual disputes, do not give verdicts which show favouritism or inconsistency, but let them always be the same on the same issues; for it is both proper and expedient that the judgement of kings should be unchanging on matters of justice, like well-founded laws. [19] Administer the state in the same way as your family estate: as to its buildings, resplendently and royally; as to its administration, thriftily, in order that you may be both popular and solvent at the same time. Make a display of magnificence, not in one of those extravagant celebrations that immediately disappear, but in the ways I have mentioned and in the beauty of your possessions and the benefits you confer on your friends; for it is such expenditures as these that will stand by you in life, and you will leave to your successors a legacy worth more than you have spent.

[20] In the worship of the gods, do as your ancestors have indicated, but consider that the finest offering and the greatest form of worship is to make yourself as good and as just as possible; for such men may hope to enjoy greater favour from the gods than those who slaughter many victims. Honour with state office those friends who

- τοὺς οἰκειοτάτους, ταῖς δ' ἀληθείαις αὐταῖς τοὺς εὐ-
 21 νουσιτάτους. φυλακὴν ἀσφαλεστάτην ἡγοῦ τοῦ σώμα-
 τος εἶναι τὴν τε τῶν φίλων ἀρετὴν καὶ τὴν τῶν πολι-
 τῶν εὐνοίαν καὶ τὴν σαυτοῦ φρόνησιν· διὰ γὰρ τούτων
 καὶ κτᾶσθαι καὶ σώζειν τὰς τυραννίδας μάλιστα' ἂν
 τις δύναιτο. κήδου τῶν οἴκων τῶν πολιτικῶν, καὶ νό-
 μιζε καὶ τοὺς δαπανῶντας ἀπὸ τῶν σῶν ἀναλίσκειν ^b
 καὶ τοὺς ἐργαζομένους τὰ σὰ πλείω ποιεῖν· ἅπαντα
 γὰρ τὰ τῶν οἰκούντων τὴν πόλιν οἰκεῖα τῶν καλῶς
 22 βασιλευόντων ἐστί. διὰ παντὸς τοῦ χρόνου τὴν ἀλή-
 θειαν οὕτω φαίνου προτιμῶν ὥστε πιστοτέρους εἶναι
 τοὺς σοὺς λόγους μᾶλλον ἢ τοὺς τῶν ἄλλων ὄρκους.
 ἅπανσι μὲν τοῖς ξένοις ἀσφαλῆ τὴν πόλιν πάρεχε καὶ
 πρὸς τὰ συμβόλαια νόμιμον, περὶ πλείστου δὲ ποιου
 τῶν ἀφικνουμένων μὴ τοὺς σοὶ δωρεὰς ἄγοντας ἀλλὰ ^c
 τοὺς παρὰ σοῦ λαμβάνειν ἀξιοῦντας· τιμῶν γὰρ τοὺς
 23 τοιούτους μᾶλλον παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις εὐδοκιμήσεις. τοὺς
 πολλοὺς φόβους ἐξαίρει τῶν πολιτῶν, καὶ μὴ βούλου
 περιδεῖς εἶναι τοὺς μηδὲν ἀδικοῦντας· ὅπως γὰρ ἂν
 τοὺς ἄλλους πρὸς σαυτὸν διαθῇς, οὕτω καὶ σὺ πρὸς
 ἐκείνους ἔξεις. ποιεῖ μὲν μηδὲν μετ' ὀργῆς, δόκει δὲ τοῖς
 ἄλλοις, ὅταν σοὶ καιρὸς ᾗ. δεινὸς μὲν φαίνου τῷ μηδὲν
 σε λανθάνειν τῶν γιγνομένων, πρᾶος δὲ τῷ τῆς τιμω- ^d
 ρίας ἐλάττους ποιεῖσθαι τῶν ἀμαρτανομένων.
 24 Ἄρχικὸς εἶναι βούλου μὴ χαλεπότητι μηδὲ τῷ
 σφόδρα κολάζειν ἀλλὰ τῷ πάντας ἡττᾶσθαι τῆς σῆς
 διανοίας καὶ νομίζειν ὑπὲρ τῆς αὐτῶν σωτηρίας ἄμει-
 νον αὐτῶν σὲ βουλεύεσθαι. πολεμικὸς μὲν ἴσθι ταῖς
 ἐπιστήμαις καὶ ταῖς παρασκευαῖς, εἰρηνικὸς δὲ τῷ μη-
 δὲν παρὰ τὸ δίκαιον πλεονεκτεῖν. οὕτως ὁμίλει τῶν
 πόλεων πρὸς τὰς ἡττους ὥσπερ ἂν τὰς κρείττους πρὸς ^e
 25 ἑαυτὸν ἀξιώσεας. φιλονίκει μὴ περὶ πάντων, ἀλλὰ
 περὶ ὧν κρατήσαντί σοι μέλλοι συνοίσειν. φαύλους

are your closest relatives, but reserve true honour for those who are most loyal. [21] Consider that your most secure bodyguard lies in the virtue of your friends, the loyalty of your citizens and your own wisdom; for it is through these that one can best acquire dominion and best retain it. Show concern for the property of your leading citizens, and consider the spenders to be drawing on your resources and the workers to be adding to your wealth; for all the property of those who reside in the city belongs to the kings who rule them well. [22] Throughout your reign show that you value truth so highly that mere words from you are to be trusted more than the oaths of other men. Render the city safe for all foreigners to visit and scrupulous in its dealings with them, and of such visitors pay most regard not to those who bring you gifts but to those who expect to receive gifts from you; for it is by honouring such men that you will enjoy greater fame among other nations. [23] Relieve your citizens of most of their fears, and do not wish terror upon those who are doing no wrong; for you will have the same feelings towards others as you dispose them to have towards you. Do nothing in anger, but appear to others to be doing so when the occasion seems right. Make a show of your power by letting no occurrence escape your notice, but of your kindness by making punishments less severe than the offences.

[24] Seek to show your authority not by cruelty nor by severe punishment, but by inducing all your people to submit to your judgement and to believe that you are able to plan for their welfare better than they are. Be a man of war in your military knowledge and preparations, but a man of peace in your avoidance of all unjust aggression. Conduct your relations with weaker states as you would expect the stronger states to conduct theirs with you. [25] Do not make a contest of every issue, but only of those in which victory is likely to bring you advantage. Regard as weak not those men who

ἡγοῦ μὴ τοὺς συμφερόντως ἡττωμένους ἀλλὰ τοὺς
μετὰ βλάβης περιγιγνομένους. μεγαλόφρονας νόμιξε 20
μὴ τοὺς μείζω περιβαλλομένους ὧν οἰοί τ' εἶσι κατα-
σχῆν, ἀλλὰ τοὺς καλῶν μὲν ἐφιεμένους, ἔξεργάζεσθαι
26 δὲ δουαμένους οἷς ἂν ἐπιχειρῶσιν. ζήλου μὴ τοὺς με-
γίστην ἀρχὴν κτησαμένους ἀλλὰ τοὺς ἄριστα τῇ παρ-
ούσῃ χρῆσαμένους, καὶ νόμιξε τελέως εὐδαιμονήσειν,
οὐκ ἂν πάντων ἀνθρώπων μετὰ φόβων καὶ κινδύνων
καὶ κακίας ἄρξης, ἀλλ' ἂν τοιοῦτος ὧν οἶον χρὴ καὶ
πράττων ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ παρόντι μετρίων ἐπιθυμῆς καὶ b
μηδενὸς τούτων ἀτυχῆς.

27 (ή.) Φίλους κτῶ μὴ πάντας τοὺς βουλομένους
ἀλλὰ τοὺς τῆς σῆς φύσεως ἀξίους ὄντας, μηδὲ μεθ' ὧν
ἥδιστα συνδιατρίβεις, ἀλλὰ μεθ' ὧν ἄριστα τὴν πόλιν
διοικήσεις. ἀκριβεῖς ποιοῦ τὰς δοκιμασίας τῶν σύν-
όντων, εἰδὼς, ὅτι πάντες οἱ μὴ σοι πλησιάσαντες
ὅμοιόν σε τοῖς χρωμένοις εἶναι νομιοῦσιν. τοιούτους
ἐφίστη τοῖς πράγμασι τοῖς μὴ διὰ σοῦ γιγνομένοις, c
ὥς αὐτὸς τὰς αἰτίας ἔξων ὧν ἂν ἐκείνοι πρᾶξωσιν.

28 πιστοὺς ἡγοῦ μὴ τοὺς ἅπαν ὅ τι ἂν λέγῃς ἢ ποιῇς
ἐπαινοῦντας ἀλλὰ τοὺς τοῖς ἀμαρτανομένοις ἐπιτι-
μῶντας. δίδου παρησίαν τοῖς εὖ φρονοῦσιν, ἵνα περὶ
ὧν ἂν ἀμφιγνοῇς ἔχῃς τοὺς συνδοκιμάζοντας. διόρα
καὶ τοὺς τέχνη κολακεύοντας καὶ τοὺς μετ' εὐνοίας
θεραπεύοντας, ἵνα μὴ πλέον οἱ πονηροὶ τῶν χρηστῶν
ἔχωσιν. ἄκουε τοὺς λόγους τοὺς περὶ ἀλλήλων, καὶ
πειρῶ γνωρίζειν ἅμα τοὺς τε λέγοντας, ὅποιοί τινές
29 εἶσι, καὶ περὶ ὧν ἂν λέγωσιν. ταῖς αὐταῖς κόλαξε ζη- d
μίαις τοὺς ψευδῶς διαβάλλοντας αἷσπερ τοὺς ἔξαμαρ-
τάνοντας.

Ἄρχε σαυτοῦ μηδὲν ἡττον ἢ τῶν ἄλλων, καὶ τοῦθ'
ἡγοῦ βασιλικώτατον, ἂν μηδεμιᾷ δουλεύῃς τῶν ἡδο-

gain an advantage by accepting defeat, but those who suffer injury from victory. Regard as noble-hearted not those who attempt to embrace more than they can hold, but those who, having noble aims, are able to accomplish the task they have set themselves. [26] Emulate, not those who have acquired the largest empire, but those who have made best use of the one they have; and consider that you will enjoy complete prosperity not if you rule over the whole world with fears, dangers and wickedness as your constant companions, but if, being the man you should be and continuing to act in your present way, you set your heart on moderate objectives and fail in none of them.

[27] Make friends not with all and sundry, but only with those whose character is worthy of you; nor yet with those whose company you will most enjoy, but with those who will help you govern the state best. Carry out the most stringent examinations of your associates, knowing that all those who are not in your immediate circle will think you are like your companions. In appointing men for assignments which are not under your direct control, realise that you will be held personally responsible for whatever they do. [28] Regard as your most trustworthy friends not those who praise everything you say or do, but those who criticise your mistakes. Allow free expression to men of good sense, so that you may have men to help you judge in matters where you are in doubt. Distinguish between those who craftily flatter you and those who serve you loyally, lest wicked men gain the advantage over good men. Listen to what they say about one another, and try to judge the character both of the speakers and their subjects. [29] Inflict the same punishments upon false accusers as upon actual wrongdoers.

Govern yourself no less than your subjects, and consider it the highest achievement of kingship if you are slave to no pleasure but rule

νῶν, ἀλλὰ κρατῆς τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν μᾶλλον ἢ τῶν πολι-
 τῶν. μηδεμίαν συνουσίαν εἰκῇ προσδέχου μηδ' ἀλογί-
 στως, ἀλλ' ἐπ' ἐκείναις ταῖς διατριβαῖς ἐθίξε σαντὸν
 χαίρειν, ἐξ ὧν αὐτός τ' ἐπιδώσεις καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις βελ- e
 30 τίων εἶναι δόξεις. (θ'.) Μὴ φαίνου φιλοτιμούμενος
 ἐπὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις, ἀ καὶ τοῖς κακοῖς διαπράσσθαι
 δυνατόν ἐστιν, ἀλλ' ἐπ' ἀρετῇ μέγα φρονῶν, ἧς οὐδὲν
 μέρος τοῖς πονηροῖς μέτεστιν. νόμιζε τῶν τιμῶν ἀλη-
 θεστάτας εἶναι μὴ τὰς ἐν τῷ φανεροῦ μετὰ δέοντος γι-
 γνομένας, ἀλλ' ὅταν αὐτοὶ παρ' αὐτοῖς ὄντες μᾶλλον 21
 σου τὴν γνώμην ἢ τὴν τύχην θαυμάζωσιν. λάνθανε
 μὲν, ἣν ἐπὶ τῷ σοι συμβῇ τῶν φάυλων χαίρειν, ἐνδεί-
 31 κνυσο δὲ περὶ τὰ μέγιστα σπουδάζων. μὴ τοὺς μὲν
 ἄλλους ἀξίου κοσμίως ξῆν, τοὺς δὲ βασιλέας ἀτάκτως,
 ἀλλὰ τὴν σαντοῦ σωφροσύνην παρὰδειγμα τοῖς ἄλλοις
 καθίστη, γιγνώσκων, ὅτι τὸ τῆς πόλεως ὅλης ἡθὺς
 ὁμοιοῦται τοῖς ἄρχουσιν. σημεῖον ἔστω σοι τοῦ καλῶς
 βασιλεύειν, ἃν τοὺς ἀρχομένους ὁρᾷς εὐπορωτέρους b
 καὶ σωφρονεστέρους γιγνομένους διὰ τὴν σὴν ἐπιμέ-
 32 λειαν. περὶ πλειονος ποιοῦ δόξαν καλὴν ἢ πλουττον
 μέγαν τοῖς παισὶ καταλιπεῖν· ὁ μὲν γὰρ θνητὸς, ἡ δ'
 ἀθάνατος, καὶ δόξη μὲν χρήματα κτητὰ, δόξα δὲ χρη-
 μάτων οὐκ ὠνητὴ, καὶ τὰ μὲν καὶ φάυλοις παρα-
 γίγνεται, τὴν δ' οὐχ οἶόν τ' ἀλλ' ἢ τοὺς διενεγκόντας
 κτήσασθαι. τρύφα μὲν ἐν ταῖς ἐσθῇσι καὶ τοῖς περὶ
 τὸ σῶμα κόσμοις, καρτέρει δ' ὡς χρὴ τοὺς βασιλεύον- c
 τας ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις ἐπιτηδεύμασιν, ἵν' οἱ μὲν ὁρῶντες
 διὰ τὴν ὄψιν ἄξιόν σε τῆς ἀρχῆς εἶναι νομίζωσιν, οἱ
 δὲ συνόντες διὰ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ῥώμην τὴν αὐτὴν ἐκεῖ-
 33 νοις γνώμην ἔχωσιν. ἐπισκόπει τοὺς λόγους ἀεὶ τοὺς
 σαντοῦ καὶ τὰς πράξεις, ἵν' ὡς ἐλαχίστοις ἀμαρτήμασι
 περιπίπτῃς. κράτιστον μὲν γὰρ τῆς ἀκμῆς τῶν καιρῶν

more firmly over your desires than over your people. Do not allow anyone to share your company at random and without thinking, but take pleasure in spending your time in company which will improve you and make you seem better to others. [30] Do not show yourself ambitious to achieve things which even base men can do, but show that your aspirations are towards virtue, in which bad men have no share. Regard as the truest honours not those that are conferred in the open and in fear, but when people in the privacy of their own homes express admiration for your wisdom rather than your fortune. Conceal any pleasure you take in matters of small account, but advertise your enthusiasm for matters of the greatest importance.

[31] Do not expect others to live orderly lives while kings can live in disarray, but let your own self-control stand as an example to the rest, recognising that the behaviour of the whole state is modelled on that of its rulers. Let it be a sign that you are ruling well if you see your subjects becoming more prosperous and restrained because of your supervision. [32] Attach greater priority to leaving to your children a good name than great wealth; for the latter is temporary, the former permanent. Wealth may be acquired through a good name, but a good name cannot be bought with wealth. The former comes even to the unworthy, but only men of exceptional worth can acquire the latter. Be luxurious in your dress and personal adornments, but be austere, as befits kings, in your other activities, so that your subjects should think from your appearance that you are worthy to rule them, while your courtiers form the same opinion, but through observing your strength of mind. [33] Always choose your words and actions with care, in order that you fall into as few errors as possible; for while it is best to grasp your chances at the precise moment of opportunity, those

- τυγχάνειν, ἐπειδὴ δὲ δυσκαταμαθήτως ἔχουσιν, ἐλλεί-
 πειν αἰροῦ καὶ μὴ πλεονάζειν· αἱ γὰρ μετριότητες d
 μᾶλλον ἐν ταῖς ἐνδείαις ἢ ταῖς ὑπερβολαῖς ἐνείσιν.
- 34 (ι'.) Ἀστεῖος εἶναι πειρῶ καὶ σεμνός· τὸ μὲν γὰρ τῇ
 τυραννίδι πρόπει, τὸ δὲ πρὸς τὰς συνουσίας ἀρμόττει.
 χαλεπώτατον δὲ τοῦτο πάντων ἐστὶ τῶν προσταγμάτων·
 εὐρήρεις γὰρ ὥς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ τοὺς μὲν σεμνυνομένους
 ψυχροὺς ὄντας, τοὺς δὲ βουλομένους ἀστεῖους εἶναι
 ταπεινοὺς φαινομένους. δεῖ δὲ χρησθᾶι μὲν ἀμφοτέ-
 ραις ταῖς ιδέαις ταύταις, τὴν δὲ συμφορὰν τὴν ἐκατέρω e
- 35 προσοῦσαν διαφεύγειν. ὅτι ἂν ἀκριβῶσαι βουληθῆς
 ὧν ἐπίστασθαι προσήκει τοὺς βασιλέας, ἐμπειρίᾳ μέ-
 ιθι καὶ φιλοσοφίᾳ· τὸ μὲν γὰρ φιλοσοφεῖν τὰς ὁδοὺς
 σοι δείξει, τὸ δ' ἐπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἔργων γυμνάζεσθαι
 δύνασθαι σε χρησθᾶι τοῖς πράγμασι ποιήσει. 22
- Θεώρει τὰ γιννόμενα καὶ τὰ συμπίπτοντα καὶ
 τοῖς ιδιώταις καὶ τοῖς τυράννοις· ἂν γὰρ τὰ παρε-
 ληλυθότα μνημονεύῃς, ἄμεινον περὶ τῶν μελλόν-
- 36 των βουλευσεί. δεινὸν ἡγοῦ τῶν μὲν ιδιωτῶν τινὰς
 ἐθέλειν ἀποθνήσκειν, ἵνα τελευτήσαντες ἐπαινε-
 θῶσι, τοὺς δὲ βασιλέας μὴ τολμᾶν χρησθᾶι τοῖς ἐπιτη-
 δεύμασι τούτοις, ἐξ ὧν ζῶντες εὐδοκιμήσουσιν. βούλου
 τὰς εἰκόνας τῆς ἀρετῆς ὑπόμνημα μᾶλλον ἢ τοῦ σώμα- b
 τος καταλιπεῖν. μάλιστα μὲν πειρῶ τὴν ἀσφάλειαν καὶ
 σαυτῶ καὶ τῇ πόλει διαφυλάττειν· ἣν δ' ἀναγκασθῆς
 κινδυνεύειν, αἰροῦ τεθνάναι καλῶς μᾶλλον ἢ ζῆν αἰ-
- 37 σχρῶς. ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις μέμνησο τῆς βασιλείας,
 καὶ φρόντιζ' ὅπως μηδὲν ἀνάξιον τῆς τιμῆς ταύτης
 πράξεις. (ια'.) Μὴ περιύδῃς τὴν σαυτοῦ φύσιν ἅπασαν
 ἅμα διαλυθεῖσαν· ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ θνητοῦ σώματος ἔτυχες,
- 38 πειρῶ τῆς ψυχῆς ἀθάνατον μνήμην καταλιπεῖν. με- c
 λέτα περὶ καλῶν ἐπιτηδευμάτων λέγειν, ἵνα συνεθι-

moments are difficult to gauge, so choose to fall short rather than to overstep them, since the happy medium is to be found in insufficiency rather than in excess. [34] Try to be both polite and dignified; for dignity is appropriate in a monarch, and politeness fits his social needs. But this is the most difficult piece of advice to follow, for you will find that, generally speaking, those who stand on their dignity are cold, while those who try to be polite seem to lower themselves. But you should adopt both these styles of behaviour and try to avoid the danger that accompanies each. [35] Whatever necessary aspect of a king's knowledge you wish to study in detail, pursue it in practice as well as through theoretical study; for the latter will show you the way, but training yourself in the work itself will enable you to handle the affairs themselves. Observe the experiences and misfortunes which befall both private citizens and kings; for if you keep past events in your mind you will deliberate more effectively for the future. [36] Since some private citizens are prepared to give their lives in order to receive praise after death, you should think it shocking for kings not to have the courage to follow a course of conduct from which they will earn fame while still alive. Prefer to leave as your monument images of your virtue rather than of your body. Try, as your main priority, to maintain both your own and the state's security; but if you are forced to risk your life, choose to die nobly rather than live in ignominy. [37] In all your deeds remember you are king, and take care to do nothing unworthy of that high office.

Do not allow all traces of your life to be destroyed at one stroke; but since you were given a mortal body, try to leave an immortal memorial of your spirit. [38] When you practise speaking, choose noble subjects, so that you may form the habit of thinking thoughts which

- σθῆς ὅμοια τοῖς εἰρημένοις φρονεῖν. ἄττ' ἂν σοι λογι-
 ζομένῳ φαίνεται βέλτιστα, ταῦτα τοῖς ἔργοις ἐπιτέλει.
 ὦν τὰς δόξας ζηλοῖς, μιμοῦ τὰς πράξεις. ἃ τοῖς αὐτοῦ
 παισὶν ἂν συμβουλευέσκειας, τούτοις αὐτὸς ἐμμένειν
 39 ἀξίου. χρῶ τοῖς εἰρημένοις ἢ ζήτει βελτίῳ τούτων.
 σοφοὺς νόμιζε μὴ τοὺς ἀκριβῶς περὶ μικρῶν ἐρίζον- d
 τας ἀλλὰ τοὺς εὖ περὶ τῶν μεγάλων λέγοντας· μηδὲ
 τοὺς τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις εὐδαιμονίαν ὑπισχνουμένους,
 αὐτοὺς δ' ἐν πολλαῖς ἀπορίαις ὄντας, ἀλλὰ τοὺς
 μέτρια μὲν περὶ αὐτῶν λέγοντας, ὁμιλεῖν δὲ καὶ τοῖς
 πράγμασι καὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις δυναμένους, καὶ μὴ
 διαταραττομένους ἐν ταῖς τοῦ βίου μεταβολαῖς, ἀλλὰ
 καλῶς καὶ μετρίως καὶ τὰς συμφορὰς καὶ τὰς εὐτυ-
 χίας φέρειν ἐπισταμένους.
- 40 (ιβ'). Καὶ μὴ θανμάσῃς, εἰ πολλὰ τῶν λεγομένων e
 ἐστίν, ἃ καὶ σὺ γιγνώσκεις· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐμὲ τοῦτο παρέ-
 λαθεν, ἀλλ' ἠπιστάμην, ὅτι τοσούτων ὄντων τὸ πλη-
 θος καὶ τῶν ἄλλων καὶ τῶν ἀρχόντων οἱ μὲν τι τού-
 των εἰρήκασιν, οἱ δ' ἀκηκόασιν, οἱ δ' ἐτέρους ποιοῦν- 23
 τας ἑωράκασιν, οἱ δ' αὐτοὶ τυγχάνουσιν ἐπιτηδεύοντες
- 41 ἀλλὰ γὰρ οὐκ ἐν τοῖς λόγοις χρὴ τούτοις[τῶν ἐπιτηδευ-
 μάτων]ζητεῖν τὰς καινότητας, ἐν οἷς οὔτε παράδοξον
 οὔτ' ἄπιστον οὔτ' ἔξω τῶν νομιζομένων οὐδὲν ἔξεστιν
 εἰπεῖν, ἀλλ' ἠγεῖσθαι τοῦτον χαριέστατον, ὅς ἂν τῶν
 διεσπαρμένων ἐν ταῖς τῶν ἄλλων διανοαῖς ἀθροῖσαι
 πλεῖστα δυνήθῃ καὶ φράσαι κάλλιστα περὶ αὐτῶν. b
- 42 ἐπεὶ ἡκέτι μοι πρόδηλον ἦν, ὅτι τὰ συμβουλευόντα
 καὶ τῶν ποιημάτων καὶ τῶν συγγραμμάτων χρησιμώ-
 τατα μὲν ἅπαντες νομίζουσιν, οὐ μὴν ἡδιστα γ' αὐτῶν
 ἀκούουσιν, ἀλλὰ πεπόνθασιν ὅπερ πρὸς τοὺς νουθε-
 τοῦντας· καὶ γὰρ ἐκείνους ἐπαινοῦσι μὲν, πλησιάζειν
 δὲ βούλονται τοῖς συνεξαμαρτάνουσιν ἀλλ' οὐ τοῖς

match your words. Whatever seems to you on consideration to be the best course, translate this into action. Imitate the actions of men whose reputations you envy. Feel obliged to follow yourself any advice you would give your own children. [39] Make use of what I have said or seek better advice. Regard as wise not those who argue pedantically about small matters, but those who speak well on important subjects; and not those who, while themselves in sore straits, promise prosperity to others, but those who, while making modest claims for themselves, are conversant with both affairs and men, and are not perturbed by life's changes of fortune, but know how to bear nobly and moderately both its disasters and its blessings.

[40] And do not be surprised if many of the things I have said are as well known to you as they are to me. It is not that this fact has escaped my notice, for I knew all along that such a large number of people and their rulers would include some who had uttered one or other of these precepts, some who had heard them, some who had seen others practising them, and some who are acting on them in their own lives. [41] But in discourses such as this one should not seek novelties, for in these it is not possible to say anything paradoxical or incredible or outside the accepted norms. Rather should we regard as the most elegant of authors the one with the greatest ability to assemble the most ideas from those scattered among the thoughts of other men, and to express them in the finest form. [42] Now I have been aware from the beginning that, while those writings which give advice, whether in verse or prose, are thought by all to be the most useful, yet it is certainly not to them that they listen with the greatest pleasure. No; they feel the same as they do towards people who admonish them; for while praising those men, they prefer the company of those who share their mistakes, not those who try to dissuade them

- 43 ἀποτρέπουσιν. σημείον δ' ἄν τις ποιήσαιτο τὴν Ἡσιό- c
 δου καὶ Θεόγνιδος καὶ Φωκυλίδου ποιήσιν· καὶ γὰρ
 τούτους φασὶ μὲν ἀρίστους γεγενῆσθαι συμβούλους
 τῷ βίῳ τῷ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ταῦτα δὲ λέγοντες αἰροῦν-
 ται συνδιατρίβειν ταῖς ἀλλήλων ἀνοίαις μᾶλλον ἢ ταῖς
 44 ἐκείνων ὑποθήκαις. ἔτι δ' εἴ τις ἐκλέξειε τῶν προε-
 χύντων ποιητῶν τὰς καλουμένας γνώμας, ἐφ' αἷς ἐκεί-
 νοι μάλιστ' ἐσπούδασαν, ὁμοίως ἂν καὶ πρὸς ταύτας
 διατεθεῖεν· ἥδιον γὰρ ἂν κωμωδίας τῆς φανυτοτά- d
 της ἢ τῶν οὔτω τεχνικῶς πεποιημένων ἀκούσειαν.
- 45 (γ'). Καὶ τί δεῖ καθ' ἓν ἕκαστον λέγοντα διατρίβειν;
 ὅλως γὰρ εἰ' θέλομεν σκοπεῖν τὰς φύσεις τὰς τῶν ἀν-
 θρώπων, εὐρήσομεν τοὺς πολλοὺς αὐτῶν οὔτε τῶν σι-
 τιῶν χαίροντας τοῖς ὑγιεινοτάτοις οὔτε τῶν ἐπιτηδευ-
 μάτων τοῖς καλλίστοις οὔτε τῶν πραγμάτων τοῖς βελ-
 τίστοις οὔτε τῶν θρεμμάτων τοῖς ὠφελιμωτάτοις, ἀλλὰ
 παντάπασιν ἐναντίας τῷ συμφεροντι τὰς ἡδονὰς ἔχον- e
 τας, καὶ δοκοῦντας καρτερικυὺς καὶ φιλοπόνους εἶναι
- 46 τοὺς τῶν δεόντων τι ποιοῦντας· ὥστε πῶς ἂν τις τοῖς
 τοιούτοις ἢ παραινῶν ἢ διδάσκων ἢ χρησιμὸν τι λέ-
 γων ἀρέσειεν; οἱ πρὸς τοῖς εἰρημένοις φθονοῦσι μὲν
 τοῖς εὖ φρονοῦσιν, ἀπλοῦς δ' ἡγοῦνται τοὺς νοῦν οὐκ 24
 ἔχοντας, οὔτω δὲ τὰς ἀληθείας τῶν πραγμάτων φεύ-
 γουσιν, ὥστ' οὐδὲ τὰ σφέτερόν αὐτῶν ἴσασι, ἀλλὰ
 λυποῦνται μὲν περὶ τῶν ἰδίων λογιζόμενοι, χαίρουσι
 δὲ περὶ τῶν ἀλλοτρίων διαλεγόμενοι, βούλονται δ' ἂν
 τῷ σώματι κακοπαθεῖναι μᾶλλον ἢ τῇ ψυχῇ πονῆσαι
- 47 καὶ σκέψασθαι περὶ τίνος τῶν ἀναγκαίων. εὖροι δ' ἂν
 τις αὐτοὺς ἐν μὲν ταῖς πρὸς ἀλλήλους συνουσίαις ἢ
 λοιδοροῦντας ἢ λοιδορουμένους, ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἐρημίαις b
 οὐ βουλευομένους ἀλλ' εὐχομένους. λέγω δ' οὐ καθ'
 ἀπάντων ἀλλὰ κατὰ τῶν ἐνόχων τοῖς εἰρημένοις ὄν-

from them. [43] One might cite the poetry of Hesiod and Theognis and Phocylides to prove this point, for these, they say, have been the best counsellors for human conduct. But while affirming this, men choose to spend their time studying one another's follies rather than the advice of these teachers. [44] Again, if one were to make a selection from the leading poets of those thoughts, as they are called, to which they attached the greatest importance, men's attitude to these would be the same as before: they would be happier listening to the most worthless comedy than to such skilfully written poetry. [45] But what need is there to spend time giving separate examples? For if we are willing to examine human nature as a whole, we shall find that the majority of men enjoy not the food that is most healthy nor the noblest pursuits, nor the best activities, nor the cultivation of what is the most beneficial, but their pleasures are wholly contrary to their best interests, and they regard those who have some sense of duty as austere and over-conscientious. [46] So how can one please such people while advising or instructing them or trying to tell them something useful? For besides what I have said of them, they resent men of wisdom, while regarding as sincere men who lack sense. They shun the realities of life so much that they are even ignorant of their own interests, are pained at having to work out their own problems, and take pleasure instead in discussing those of other people. They would prefer suffering physical discomfort to exerting the mind and taking thought for anything that needs to be done. [47] In company they would be found engaged in giving and receiving abuse, and in private not with practical planning but in wishful thinking. But I am speaking not of all, but only of those deserving these criticisms. [48] This

- 48 τῶν. ἐκεῖνο δ' οὖν φανερόν, ὅτι δεῖ τοὺς βουλομένους
 ἢ ποιεῖν ἢ γράφειν τι κεχαρισμένον τοῖς πολλοῖς μὴ
 τοὺς ὠφελιμωτάτους τῶν λόγων ζητεῖν ἀλλὰ τοὺς μυ-
 θωδεδεστάτους· ἀκούοντες μὲν γὰρ τῶν τοιούτων χαί-
 ρουσι, θεωροῦντες δὲ τοὺς ἀγῶνας καὶ τὰς ἀμίλλας ^c
 διὸ καὶ τὴν Ὀμήρου ποίησιν καὶ τοὺς πρώτους εὐρόν-
 τας τραγωδίαν ἄξιον θαυμάζειν, ὅτι κατιδόντες τὴν
 φύσιν τὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀμφοτέραις ταῖς ἰδέαις
 49 ταύταις κατεχρήσαντο πρὸς τὴν ποίησιν. ὁ μὲν γὰρ
 τοὺς ἀγῶνας καὶ τοὺς πολέμους τοὺς τῶν ἡμιθέων
 ἐμυθολόγησεν, οἱ δὲ τοὺς μύθους εἰς ἀγῶνας καὶ
 πράξεις κατέστησαν, ὥστε μὴ μόνον ἀκουστούς ἡμῖν
 ἀλλὰ καὶ θεατοὺς γενέσθαι. τοιούτων οὖν παρα- ^d
 δειγμάτων ὑπαρχόντων δέδεικται τοῖς ἐπιθυμοῦσι
 τοὺς ἀκροωμένους ψυχαγωγεῖν, ὅτι τοῦ μὲν νουθετεῖν
 καὶ συμβουλεύειν ἀφεκτέον, τὰ δὲ τοιαῦτα λεκτέον,
 οἷς ὁρῶσι τοὺς ὄχλους μάλιστα χαίροντας.
- 50 (ιδ'.) Ταῦτα δὲ διηλθὼν ἡγούμενος σὲ δεῖν, τὸν
 οὐχ ἕνα τῶν πολλῶν ἀλλὰ πολλῶν ὄντα τύραννον,
 μὴ τὴν αὐτὴν γνώμην ἔχειν τοῖς ἄλλοις, μηδὲ τὰ
 σπουδαῖα τῶν πραγμάτων μηδὲ τοὺς εὐφρονοῦντας
 τῶν ἀνθρώπων ταῖς ἡδοναῖς κρίνειν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῶν ^e
 51 χρησίμων αὐτοὺς δοκιμάζειν, ἄλλως τ' ἐπειδὴ περὶ
 μὲν τῶν γυμνασίων τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀμφισβητοῦσιν οἱ
 περὶ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ὄντες, καί φασιν οἱ μὲν διὰ τῶν
 ἑριστικῶν λόγων, οἱ δὲ διὰ τῶν πολιτικῶν, οἱ δὲ δι' ²⁵
 ἄλλων τινῶν φρονημωτέρους ἔσεσθαι τοὺς αὐτοῖς πλη-
 σιάζοντας, ἐκεῖνο δὲ πάντες ὁμολογοῦσιν, ὅτι δεῖ τὸν
 καλῶς πεπαιδευμένον ἐξ ἑκάστου τούτων φαίνεσθαι
 52 βουλευέσθαι δυνάμενον. χρὴ τοίνυν ἀφέμενον τῶν
 ἀμφισβητουμένων ἐπὶ τοῦ συνομολογουμένου λαμ-
 βάνειν αὐτῶν τὸν ἔλεγχον, καὶ μάλιστα μὲν ἐπὶ τῶν

much, then, is clear, that those wishing to write any poetry or prose that is to please the masses, should look not for the most beneficial discourses but for the most romantic; for audiences delight in such fictions just as spectators enjoy games and contests. For that reason one may well admire the poetry of Homer and the earliest tragedians, because they discerned human nature and combined both these elements in their poetry. [49] Homer narrated the myths describing the struggles and wars of the heroes, while the tragedians set the myths in a framework of contests and actions, so that we become not merely an audience but spectators as well. Thus, with such models before us, it has been proved that those who wish to attract audiences should avoid admonishing and counselling them, and should say the sort of things which they see to be most pleasing to the crowd.

[50] I have dealt thoroughly with these matters because I think that you, who are not one of the masses but king over them, should not share the mentality of other men; nor should you judge the importance of matters or the good sense of men by the criterion of pleasure, but estimate their worth by the usefulness of their actions; [51] especially since the philosophers, while they debate about the proper training of the soul, some saying that their students will become wiser through disputation, others through political discourses, and others through yet other means, are all agreed that the well-educated man should show himself able, whichever training he has received, to give reasoned counsel. [52] You should therefore abandon what is in dispute and examine men's worth on the basis of agreed principles, preferably

- καιρῶν θεωρεῖν συμβουλευοντας, εἰ δὲ μὴ, καὶ καθ' ὧν τῶν πραγμάτων λέγοντας. καὶ τοὺς μὲν μηδὲν ὅλων γινώσκοντας τῶν δεόντων ἀποδοκίμαξε· ἤλουν γὰρ ὡς ὁ μηδὲν ὦν αὐτὸς χρήσιμος οὐδ' ἂν ἄλλον φρόνι-
 53 μον ποιήσεις· τοὺς δὲ νοῦν ἔχοντας καὶ δυναμένους ὁρᾶν πλεον τι τῶν ἄλλων περὶ πολλοῦ ποιοῦ καὶ θεράπευε, γινώσκων, ὅτι σύμβουλος ἀγαθὸς χρησιμώτατον καὶ τυραννικώτατον ἀπάντων τῶν κτημάτων ἐστίν. ἡγοῦ δὲ τούτους μεγίστην σοὶ ποιεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν, οἵτινες ἂν τὴν διάνοιαν τὴν σὴν πλεῖστ' ὥφε-
 λῆσαι δυνήθῳσιν.
- 54 (ιε'). Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν ἅ τε γινώσκω παρήνεκα καὶ τιμῶ σε τούτοις οἷς τυγχάνω δυνάμενος· βούλου δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους, ὅπερ εἶπον ἀρχόμενος, μὴ τὰς εἰθισμένους ἄγειν σοὶ δωρεὰς, ἃς ὑμεῖς πολὺ πλείονος ἀγοράζετε παρὰ τῶν διδόντων ἢ παρὰ τῶν πωλούντων, ἀλλὰ τοιαύτας, αἷς καὶ σφόδρα χρῆ καὶ μηδεμίαν ἡμέραν διαλείπης οὐ κατατρίψεις, ἀλλὰ μείζους καὶ πλείονος ἀξίας ποιήσεις.

observing how they tender advice on particular occasions, or failing that how they speak on general matters. And when they are wholly ignorant of what is to the point, reject them, for it is clear that a man who is of no use in himself cannot make another man wise; [53] but when they show good sense and the ability to see farther than others, treasure and cultivate them, realising that a good adviser is the most useful of possessions and the most desirable for a king. And consider that those men add most to the greatness of your kingdom who can contribute most to your understanding.

[54] Now I have offered you all the good advice I know, and I honour you with those gifts which I happen to possess. It is for you to recall what I said at the beginning and ask your other friends to bring you, not the customary presents, which you buy at much greater cost from those who give them than from those who sell, but gifts of such a character, that even though you make unceasing daily use of them, you will not wear them out, and will greatly increase their size and worth.